DEWEY PAINTING ON LOAN

National Exhibition Includes Work of Zogbaum

The painting which normally hangs in the lobby of the State House, "Admiral George Dewey at Manila Bay," is on loan to the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, for an exhibition honoring the sesquicentennial of the city of Washington as the national capitol. This is an exhibit of American artists which has been open since July 8th. The significance of the Vermont painting is that it was done by Rufus Fairchild Zogbaum (1849-1925), essayist, author and artist, and widely known for the historic value of his works. Most of Zogbaum's paintings were based on his own observations on the scene of action.

The exhibition, "American Processional," will be closed this month.

OUR STORY OF THE MONTH

You Will Pardon Another Pun

It seems that William Maxwell Evarts of the really great Windsor, Vt., family strain was campaigning in the South in the interests of his party; and wagers were laid among his friends that in what have become known as "whistle stops," he could not fashion a pun on the name of each place. He did, however, in each case, cleverly fabricating a pun at each stop. When Chattanooga appeared, it was believed that he would lose his wagers to the joy of his companions, but he was equal to the emergency. Facing the crowd from his coach platform, he announced that he had time for only a few "Chattanugatory remarks" — probably the first time in the history of the English language that "nugatory" had been so "puningly" used.

A. W. P.

VERMONT HISTORICAL SOCIETY, MONTPELIER, VERMONT.
Hon. Leon S. Gay, President; Dr. Arthur W. Peach, Director; Mrs. Madelyn Davidson, Editor.

VHS *News and Notes*

VERMONT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Montpelier, Vermont

Sec. 34.66
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THE VERMONT HISTORICAL SOCIETY, MONTPELIER, VERMONT

News & Notes

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR ALL MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY

Volume 2 February 1951 Number 6

Douglas Day Celebration at Brandon, June 27, 1913

A BRANDON BOY GOES WEST

Gains Lincoln National Prominence

The summit of nearly every hilltop within the border of the Green Mountain State commands a view of the birthplace of some Vermonter who has made a national reputation in world affairs. February marks the birth of Abraham Lincoln, and it is interesting to note how a Vermonter influenced the life of this great American.

Stephen A. Douglas, who became the "little giant" of Illinois politics, was born in a humble cottage in Brandon on April 23, 1813. Stephen lived the life of a farm boy until he was fifteen; and, since farming did not appeal to him as a permanent means of livelihood, he moved to Middlebury and worked at the cabinet maker's trade. Here he first became interested in political affairs; and, with several of his young friends, he would debate the pros and cons of the viewpoint of Andrew Jackson and John Q. Adams. Young Douglas became an ardent Democrat through these debates.

He returned to Brandon and continued his trade but was forced to give up his career as a craftsman because of a serious illness. However, he now was able to attend the local academy for a short time.

Stephen's family moved to New York state meanwhile, and there the 17 year old boy attended school, studied the classics and set his mind on a career of law. Against his family's wishes, he started out to seek his fortune and decided to head westward. He visited Cincinnati, Louisville, St. Louis, and finally reached Jacksonville, Illinois, on foot, with 37 cents in his pocket.

The story of Douglas' public career forms an important chapter in the history of the country; and, although it is a twice-told tale, it may be of interest to you.

Even among the progressive, fast-moving Westerners, Douglas' rapid rise to prominence was spectacular. He worked at odd jobs until he was admitted to the Illinois bar. He became an eloquent champion of Andrew Jackson and, at the age of 21, State's Attorney for his district. Two years later he was in the legislature, being sent to the House for two terms and to the U. S. Senate in 1847. In Washington, Douglas headed the legislation for the admission of territories as new states and his "popular sovereignty" doctrine, which advocated the right of the people of the territories to form and regulate their domestic institutions in their own way. This doctrine was quite distasteful to many Vermonters. At this time was witnessed the momentous struggle between Mr. Douglas and Mr. Lincoln, in the campaign for the election of a senator from Illinois — resulting in the return of Senator Douglas. Probably his greatest service to the country was in the series of debates he held with Abraham Lincoln on the subject of extending slavery to the West. These debates established Lincoln as a prominent American and contributed toward his nomination and election for the presidency.

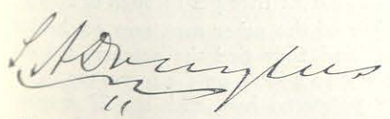
Mr. Douglas distinguished himself in Chicago civic life. Probably few of us know that he was the founder of the first University of Chicago in 1857, for he gave land on which the University was built and was president of the Board of Trustees. This university closed after his death, because of financial difficulties, but was re-established by John D. Rockefeller, Sr.

Stephen A. Douglas hastened his own death by extreme mental and physical labor during the last years of his life. After being defeated for the presidency, he strenuously supported President Lincoln in his struggle to preserve the Union. He died in Chicago on June 11, 1861.

Here is an interesting anecdote regarding Douglas. It is said that in one of his speeches of 1858, Douglas commented on the advantages of Vermont as a birthplace and we quote his words as reported at the time: "My friends, Vermont is the most glorious spot on the face of this globe for a man to be born in, *provided* he emigrates when he is very young." This has aroused much comment, but there are good reasons to believe that Senator Douglas was misunderstood and incorrectly quoted, for in his speech at Brandon in 1860, he asserted: "I have no respect for the man, whoever he was born, who does not love his native land." Some of you may have very definite views on this statement. What do you make of it?

Douglas Cottage

Douglas' visit to Vermont in 1860, after his nomination for president, was the most notable event of the summer of that year. He was only 47 years old and at the peak of his power as a party leader and of his fame as an orator. He remained nearly a week, stopping at Brandon, Burlington, Montpelier and Randolph. It is interesting to note that Lincoln polled four times Douglas' vote in Vermont just after this triumphant tour. And on the 100th anniversary of his birth, a simple but beautiful shaft of Vermont marble with a bronze tablet on each side was erected at Brandon. The illustration on page one shows the Douglas Day celebration on June 27, 1913. Guest speaker was appropriately Senator James Hamilton Lewis of Illinois.



The ivy-covered cottage where Stephen was born still stands, at the west of the site of the Monument. It is an excellent type of the houses that succeeded the log cabins of early settlers. The quaint double-doors of the entrance, the narrow entry, the low ceilings, the high mantles and huge open fireplaces are still in good repair. The Field Farm, some four miles from the village, is where the future Senator did his chores as a small boy.

We would like to conclude with a portion of Douglas' speech at Brandon in July of 1860: "I am proud of being a native of Vermont. Here I first learned to love liberty. I am proud of its Revolutionary history. Vermont not only resisted Great Britain and the Continental Congress but New York to boot; and whatever may be said of the ability of other people for self-government, Vermont has demonstrated her ability. The love of liberty shown by the Green Mountain Boys can never be excelled; and this love can never fail. Liberty loves the mountains. All history attests that mountain dwellers can never be conquered. If our liberties are ever overthrown, it will be in the dense and corrupt cities and on the densely populated plains. . . . Vermont is to the American continent what the mountains of Scotland are to Great Britain, what Switzerland is to Europe — the sought of all travelers."

THE "VERMONT PANTHER" WON'T STAY DEAD

Here He Is Again

The effort of our Director to chase the "Vermont panther" out of Vermont has resulted in the panther and panthers chasing him. One of our esteemed members writes from Buffalo to the effect that we ought to "continue the chase," although he does not refer to which type. Another of our highly valued members, also a lawyer, argues that "If the panther doesn't exist, he ought to." Another of our members whom we value, has explained in the case of the man who vanished in southern Vermont, leaving his car in the night with the lights on, that the "panther" seized him, then put out the light.

In any event, we are following the suggestions given; and it is a pleasure to offer you another authentic story (see January issue for the first) of the capture of a real Vermont panther. Through the kindness and interest of the Hon. Clarence S. Streeter, representative of Wardsboro in the present legislature, also a VHS member, we have the story his father told of seeing a panther killed in 1875. His father, born on Staten Island, N. Y., in 1864, died March 15, 1872, at the age of 78. Mr. Streeter was 75 years old when telling the story to the Windham County Historical Society. Here is the story —

* * *

John A. Streeter's Story of the Panther Hunt.

On a November day in 1875, when there were two inches of snow on the ground, two men came to our house to borrow my father's rifle. They were Henry Fitts and Stephen Perry. They said they had been following a small bear which had crossed near a lime ledge in Stratton where they had gone to get out lime rock. They had followed it up to across what we now call the Johnson place, about one-half mile above our place, had kept to the road until on coming in sight of our house, it turned off into the woods. They got the rifle, and I, being a boy of 13 years, asked if I might go with them. They said "yes", so we took the track which soon led us into a narrow strip of woods between our mowing and pasture.

Coming to a log which lay with part of it about two feet from the ground with dry leaves in under, we saw at once that the animal had been living under the log but had evidently heard us coming and went out on a run directly down the hill and out in the open where he ran some distance in plain view of the house — but no one happened to see him — back into a piece of woods back of our buildings. The men said it would be useless to follow further that day. Said they would be up in the morning and bring more men; that they would surround the woods and go in and drive him out. Well, they came up; one went around the woods to see that he was still in there. They could get only 13 men besides themselves, — not many to surround a piece of woods.

The men were placed where they thought Bruin would be most likely to come out. Then three men, two boys and four dogs were to go in and drive him out. None of the three men had a gun, but some one had brought an old musket. It was not very reliable. Some one wanted it on the outside. Some one said, "Here, Steve, you may as well take it." So they loaded it with a slug, some one spit on the lock, and said he guessed it would go. Homer Johnson had a .22 six-shooter. Mr. Fitts had nothing. We boys went to lead the dogs. We took the track, and soon came to where he had dug a hedgehog out of an old log and made a meal of it.

He must have been an expert at handling hedgehogs as he never got any quills in him. Shortly after that we came to where he had lain down under an old windfall, had heard us coming and gone out.

We now let the dogs go, and after a time came up with them again. They seemed to be trying to find his track. We all looked too, but the snow was so tracked up by the dogs that we could not see the animal tracks.

Mr. Perry, thinking it might have gone up a tree, looked up and there he was, — not a bear but a panther, hanging over a limb looking down at him. He instantly pulled up his gun, fired, and down came the cat and started to run, but it was badly hurt as the slug had gone into his breast and lodged just under the skin on top of his shoulder. Falling out of the tree he broke a shoulder on an old timber knot. Three toes were gone, probably taken by a trap. He ran a short distance, tried to climb a tree but couldn't on account of the damaged shoulder.

It was now a running fight between him and the dogs. He would run a little distance and then fight the dogs off. Finally, when he had become weakened by the loss of blood, Homer Johnson ran up, caught him by the tail and stabbed him with a jacknife. Right there lay an old log and beside it was a spruce top. To get away from Homer he made a dive between the log and the body of the spruce top. Homer hung on and the animal could neither get through or back.

One of the other men now got hold of him, and they tied the panther's tail and one leg to a limb on the spruce top. Then they peppered him with the .22, emptied the cylinder, and tried to relax, but they couldn't as they were too excited or it got jammed, and they gave it up. After a time they pulled the panther out, and finished him with a club.

By this time the men from outside were coming in. My father was first, and his eyes stuck out some when he saw what we had. Someone cut a small black ash pole. They tied the panther's feet together, slung him on the pole and carried him to our house; then father got out his horses and log sled and took them all to West Wardsboro. I think they put in the rest of the day exhibiting the panther through the town.

Osmer Fitts made some sort of a deal with the share-holder, and sent the animal away to be mounted, after which it was kept in his store at West Wardsboro for years. Sometime later, the people of Bennington borrowed him, sent him to Paris, where the Bennington bronze panther was modeled from him. The panther was returned to town, and for a time was kept by Henry Fitts, later by Oscar Newell in his grain store. Finally, it was taken to Boston, repaired, and is now in the natural history museum of that city. His weight was 110 pounds, and he measured seven feet from end of nose to tip of tail.

VHS MEMBER AMICABLY AROUSED

Orton Asserts No Indians Lived In Vermont

We are quoting a letter just received from Vrest Orton of Weston. Mr. Orton is a member of the Board of Curators and Chairman of the Committee on Development and Endowment. We'll be glad to hear from any of you, too. Your findings will be turned over to the Archaeological Committee (with your approval).

Sirs:

I am a mite shocked to see you attempting to resurrect the old saw about Indians in Vermont. It is, and has long been, my contention that no Indians, either one family, or one tribe, were ever domiciled in what is now the State of Vermont. It is a well-known fact that Vermont's arctic weather, which was even more intolerable and severe in the 16th and 17th centuries than now, was one responsible factor why Indians never made the Green Mountain land their home.

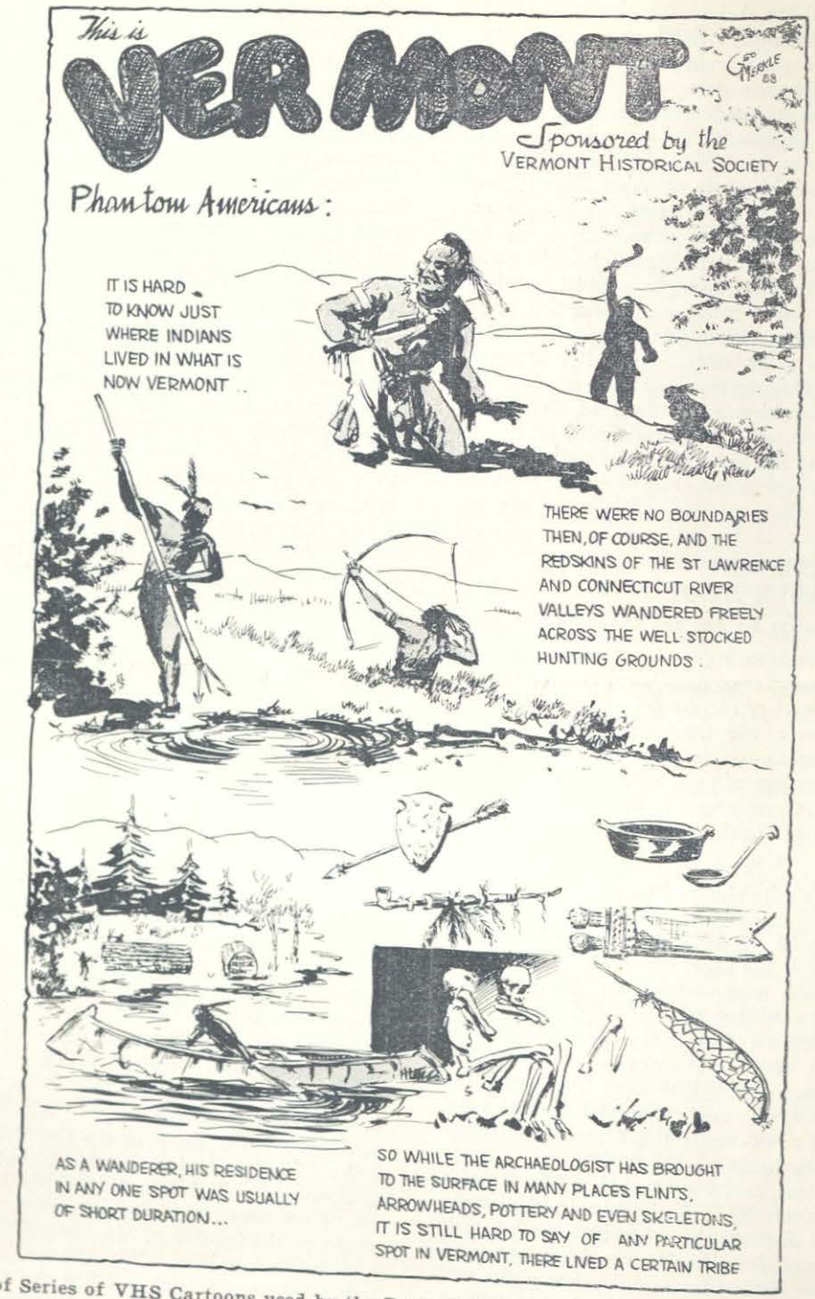
It is true, and I suspect that Mr. Brooks and his new VHS Archaeological Committee will discover this, that Indians hunted, fished and fought all over Vermont and therefore left artifacts and other plain evidence of this occupancy, but it was at best only a few nights' stand and never a permanent domicile.

The discovery of Indian arrowheads and other weapons of the hunt and of war in Vermont will attest to nothing but this fact . . . that Indians made war and hunted here. When and if Mr. Brooks will discover, under the stratum of 300 years ago or more, a complete related set of artifacts showing, on one layer, the integral conformation of an Indian village or town of more than one generation occupancy, I will eat the Barnard Panther now resting peaceably in our Museum under your professional care.

Abby Maria Hemenway, in that part of her valuable *Gazetteer* lost in the Chicago fire, stated without fear of contradiction that in none of her many years of research amongst the people then living who had heard first-hand tales of the early days of Vermont was there the slightest evidence of Indians domiciled in Vermont.

Professor Frederick Mason Adams, who was professor of archaeology at Harvard College during the time Samuel Williams (author of one of our first histories of Vermont) was at Harvard, made a visit to Williams in Rutland about the year 1783, I think it was, as Williams had made some attempt even then to settle this question of Indians living in Vermont. Prof. Adams, who is mentioned favorably by Count Rumford (Benj. Thompson) in his well-known treatise on fireplaces (as evidently Adams was interested in heating problems) made a categorical statement, which was published in the Rutland paper which Williams founded—now the *Rutland Herald*—that a long study of the early history of Vermont, and especially of the climate and snow fall, convinced him beyond cavil that there was not in North America, nor had there been in his century, a tribe of Indians hardy enough to endure the cold winter in Vermont, to say nothing of a generation.

I see no harm, certainly, in Mr. Brooks and his friends digging up the shores of Lake Champlain, but I suspect that these excavations will be in vain. No Indians ever lived on these shores or anywhere else south of the border . . . in my opinion. Of course, I am taking a big chance in making this statement, as if I have to eat that Panther in your Museum, it is going to be pretty tough.


This is
VERMONT
Sponsored by the
VERMONT HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Phantom Americans:
IT IS HARD TO KNOW JUST WHERE INDIANS LIVED IN WHAT IS NOW VERMONT..
THERE WERE NO BOUNDARIES THEN, OF COURSE, AND THE REDSKINS OF THE ST LAWRENCE AND CONNECTICUT RIVER VALLEYS WANDERED FREELY ACROSS THE WELL STOCKED HUNTING GROUNDS.
AS A WANDERER, HIS RESIDENCE IN ANY ONE SPOT WAS USUALLY OF SHORT DURATION...
SO WHILE THE ARCHAEOLOGIST HAS BROUGHT TO THE SURFACE IN MANY PLACES FLINTS, ARROWHEADS, POTTERY AND EVEN SKELETONS, IT IS STILL HARD TO SAY OF ANY PARTICULAR SPOT IN VERMONT, THERE LIVED A CERTAIN TRIBE

One of Series of VHS Cartoons used by the Rutland Daily Herald, Burlington Free Press, Brattleboro Reformer, Barre Daily Times

As a direct descendant of the first white man ever to pass a night in what is now the state of Vermont, I find that Hemenway (and I don't mean Ernest) states that when Champlain came down into the Lake that bears his name, he found two St. Francis Indians and one white man camping on Grand Isle . . . and that white man, named Teachout, was my great-great-great-great grandfather . . . I am in a good position to know that the Indians found Vermont too harsh for their own good.

Which is a wonderful compliment to the stamina of the white folks, who actually settled it.

I am, sirs, your most obedient,

VREST ORTON

* * *

From: A. W. Peach To: Vrest Orton
Subject: Winter in Vermont, Indians in Vermont, and Et Cetera

1. I am sympathetic with your points of view to a certain extent, knowing you of old, but your residence in Washington and particularly those years on the staff of *The Saturday Review of Literature* and the bridge, gin-rummy, and canasta — playing Yale men who run it have warped your mental focus. I am not so sympathetic to your reference to your "great-great-great-great-great grandfather"; that reference grates on my nerves, for I know, being the literary man you are, that you can't count back that far correctly. I shall now try to revise your mental focus in line with Vermont traditions and truth.

2. Your reference to our winters really arouses my wrath. I grant that our winters are rugged, but they have bred men of brains and brawn — and history proves it: "Great things are done when men and mountains meet"; and the mountain cold helps. Out of the lesser places, like New York city, come thin-livered and thin-minded men—(I know; I lived there once); and it was a New York business man who told Dorothy Canfield Fisher that Vermonters should make maple syrup the year around rather than for a few weeks. You get the "sappy" implication, or don't you? These Vermont winters are glorious; and as for being too cold for the Indians, I live through them, and so do you, down among the icebergs in Weston. *Quod erat demonstrandum.*

3. You offer to eat your words if I prove the existence of one Indian village. I urge you to withdraw that offer, for if you ate a few pages of your rhetoric, you would have the worst case of indigestion known to the tummy of man. I would warn you that our Archaeological Committee is made up of men who know just what they are talking about — as you and I often don't. Consider, suh: Site one — I won't tell you where lest you appear on the scene with a spade and no knowledge — has been selected as the major VHS project for the summer. Exploratory work already done indicates that the site dates back to about 230 B. C. Later on, being the loyal VHSer that you are, you will know more about it through our publications, and we may admit to the site, under guard, various *literati* like yourself where serious men will be at work. One of our expert members has studied for years the site of a long house with remnants of their fires. You will argue that the Indians there were merely warming their toes, and probably they were; but what about the pits used for storage? We learn from the *Jesuit Relations* that there was a village of 50 huts, a stone chapel with a bell near Swanton, and we know where it was. Finally, from all over the state data on sites have come, now totalling over 100. We stand on the verge of undiscovered history; and the old burial spots, the old villages, the pits, the workshops, the flint quarries — all are historical documents, as one of our experts calls them, which we propose to read; and after we have read them, you and all our members read them through our reports. You mention Abby Hemenway and her version; you and Abby are both wrong — and I have warned you for years never to go too far in trusting a woman or her source of information, particularly on Indians and the like.

4. Finally, seriously, we will be glad to send any VHS members interested in this Indian, French, and pre-Indian phase of the Society's historical investigations a copy of our mimeographed *Vermont Archaeological News Letter*. The *Quarterly* and the *News and Notes* will carry general reports, of course.

ATTENTION: ALL NEWCOMERS TO THE SOCIETY

Other Members Not Included

In keeping with the theme of this issue, let's touch again on the period of the Civil War. VHS members of long-standing will pooh-pooh this oft-told story — but there are many newcomers — folks from all sections of the country, not claiming to be historians, but who are frank to explain their support of this Society by the fact that they love Vermont, its history and its traditions. So, for them . . .

We have a question that has been put night after night to the listeners of a local radio quiz program (one your staff assists with as a means of popular education in Vermont history). Question: *It is believed that the Civil War was fought far from the boundaries of Vermont, although we do know that Vermonters played an important part at Bull Run, Gettysburg, etc. But there was one raid on Vermont. What was it?* Answer: *It was the raid on St. Albans, by a Confederate group, who had escaped from a Chicago prison and came down from Canada. Several buildings were burned, and the group walked off (or rather rode) with over* $200,000.

The group had come down from Canade in twos and threes, after escaping from Fort Douglas prison near Chicago. The original plan was to free their fellow-prisoners at the Fort, but this had failed, and the raid was made with the intent of creating terror among Vermonters and relieving pressure on the armies struggling against General Grant.

The raiders entered three banks in St. Albans, made off with the loot, attempted to set fire to the city, and then stole horses to make good their escape. Later, thirteen of the group were arrested in Canada and at their trial, it was declared that the Court had no jurisdiction. The $80,000 which had been found at the time of capture was returned to the Confederates, and they were permitted to go free. Another trial was held, and the Dominion judge declared the raid a legitimate act of war and again the prisoners were released. Canada compensated the St. Albans banks with $88,000!

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Volume 2 March 1951 Number 7

Head Table, (left to right), Vrest Orton, Mrs. Cummings, Ralph N. Hill, (chairs for Col. Allen, Mrs. Allen, Col. Warner who entered later), Gov. Emerson, Pres. Gay, Mr. Cummings, Mrs. Emerson, Lt. Gov. Johnson; others at head table but not showing in picture — Mrs. Gay, Speaker Fay and Mrs. Fay, Mrs. Johnson, Mr. and Mrs. Earle W. Newton.

CUMMINGS CLAIMS SECURITY IS FOUND IN VERMONT

Woodstock Man Presents Views at Annual Dinner

"Vermont is the plausible place in a confused world to find a certain sense of security—but its way of survival is not easy," was the keynote of the address of Philip H. Cummings of Woodstock, nationally known speaker on historical topics. A native of Hardwick, Cummings spoke to 178 guests at the Society's highly successful annual dinner on February 27th at the Pavilion Hotel in Montpelier.

Cummings based his talk on the weary and painful trek of the over one hundred captives from the tiny settlement of Deerfield, which marked the northernmost extent of Massachusetts settlement, north through the Green Mountains into Canada in February of 1704. You will remember that the Reverend John Williams was in the group, and in his narrative he was forced to record the murder of his wife and the alienation of his son, who refused to return to the white man's way of life. Upon this trek and others of captives through what is now Vermont is based the pioneer man's determination to survive, Cummings pointed out. What is it that makes people persevere? How was the pattern to survive in this state formed? The answers can be found by looking back to the treks of these captives.

Here are some other points of Cummings' talk — "This Way We've Come."